GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2329
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2008
HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PESTICIDES
Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study by Punjabi University Patiala has revealed that continuous use of pesticides is harmful for the health of the farmers in terms of damaging their DNA and exposing them to diseases like cancer;

(b) if so,the details thereof;

(c) whether deaths of farmers have taken place due to pesticide poisoning; and

(d) if so,the details thereof alongwith the steps taken to protect the farmers from the chemical pesticides?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a)&(b): A study for assessment of genetic damage in workers occupationally exposed to various pesticides in selected districts of Punjab has been conducted by a research fellow of the Departmen of Human Biology, Punjabi University, Patiala. The study suggests that the genetic damage was probably caused by pesticides and seems to have been repaired subsequently, as the follow up cases did reveal significantly lower frequency of genetic damage.

(c): Yes,Sir.

(d): As per the reports received from the State Governments, the number of deaths due to pesticides poisoning in the country was 693 during 2007-08

The Government is promoting the use of bio-pesticides and safer formulations of chemical pesticides. Review of continuing use of those pesticides which are banned/severely restricted for use in other countries of the world due to various reasons is also carried out from time to time.Based on such reviews,28 pesticides and 4 formulations of three other pesticides have been banned in the country.

The Government is promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) which encourages cultural, mechanical, biological and other methods of pest control and only need based judicious use of pesticides.Farmers' Field Schools are organized in the villages in States, including Punjab.